



Professor Les Iversen
Chair, Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs
3rd Floor (SW)
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

11 December 2013

Dear Les

The Advisory Council's advice has been instrumental in informing our legislative response on new psychoactive substances, no more so than through the provision of generic definitions, definitions that capture families of harmful drugs. This approach has ensured that the UK has controlled a large number of those new drugs now being seen in the UK and across Europe.

However, we know through our forensic early warning system and other sources that this drugs market continues to evolve. I would therefore like the ACMD to put in place a process by which the range of our generic definitions is regularly reviewed and as appropriate, advice is provided for updating our legislation. As a minimum I would expect this review to take place on an annual basis. There may of course be circumstances where you need to provide advice outside of this cycle, such as where there is a compelling evidence to advise sooner. This includes advice for immediate action on individual drugs under Temporary Class Drug Orders.

I would ask that the first tranche of this advice is provided as soon as possible, in the early part of the New Year. My officials will work with you to ensure that the ACMD has all the latest information available from our drugs early warning systems and from other government departments.

Today, we have announced a review of the legislative options to tackle New Psychoactive Substances. We will ensure that the Advisory Council is engaged with this review as it progresses. I wish to make clear that the purpose of this review is not to replace the role of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 in dealing with harmful New Psychoactive Substances but to enhance the legislative response.

The Home Secretary and I remain grateful to the Advisory Council for the attention it continues to give to this issue and the advice it provides.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norman Baker".

Norman Baker
Minister of State